



VGIN Coordinator Report to the VGIN Advisory Board
October 2, 2007

**Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation, Board of Architects,
Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors, Certified Interior Designers, and
Landscape Architects:**

Public comment period for proposed creation of “surveyor photogrammetrist” ended September 13, 2007. To see the comments, follow this link:

<http://townhall.virginia.gov/L/comments.cfm?stageid=3773>

Comments of VGIN Coordinator are below.

Establishing a license for surveyor photogrammetrists

The collaborative process, described in supporting documentation, that has occurred by all parties involved in the development of the proposed licensure for “Survey Photogrammetrist” is to be commended. In my current role as the Coordinator of the Virginia Geographic Information Network, I work closely with GIS professionals on a daily basis. My work experience also includes time as a photogrammetrist with the federal government. So I believe I understand the issues and concerns that have been raised during this long process.

I understand the desire of the small but significant photogrammetry community in Virginia that seeks further professional recognition and legitimacy, and I recognize the concerns of the land survey community. I also understand that advances in GIS technology have dramatically increased the capabilities of users of this technology. Having said all of this, I believe that a balance must be achieved that provides legitimacy to photogrammetrists as well as not prohibit Virginia from realizing the gains that Geographic Information Technology can provide. This balance can be boiled down to the determination of acceptable use.

Acceptable use for the requirement of a licensed “surveyor photogrammetrist” should be constrained to the development of legal documents developed in support of the recognized practice of land surveying. “Remote sensing technologies” are much broader than a narrow definition of “photogrammetric methods or similar remote sensing technology”.

Acceptable use by the GIS professional means that, even though GIS technology makes it easier to automate photogrammetric techniques, the GIS professional does not utilize these techniques to develop legal documents that may impinge on the legitimate role and practice of land surveying. It should not prohibit the GIS professional from utilizing this technology in governmental use if it is only for non-legal planning purposes (i.e. not for design and construction).

Lastly, I concur with the Economic Impact Analysis that requiring licensed professional photogrammetry services as a new regulation to state and local government will increase costs, though it is difficult to quantify at this time. I would recommend that a cost benefit analysis be completed after one year to reassess the cost benefit once some real numbers start arrive.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Data Clearinghouse/Metadata Portal Release, Training

The GISData.Virginia.Gov <http://GISData.Virginia.Gov> application was released in the summer of 2007. This is the “go to” site for available Virginia geospatial data discovery. It also serves as the “metadata portal” where state agencies and local governments will be loading geospatial metadata. A series of workshops were conducted this summer by Lyle Hornbaker (VGIN), James Wilson (JMU) and John McGee (VT). Demand is sufficient to warrant further workshops for the end of the year.

Plans are being made to identify state agency geospatial data stewards and to renew the requirement for quarterly geospatial metadata submission beginning in January 2008. The site is new and requires that state and local government users populate it with information. VGIN plans an ongoing effort over the next year to make it more robust. In addition, we are linking it to the federal Geospatial OneStop metadata portal so that federal partners can utilize it as well.

EMMA installation

VGIN successfully provided project management for the deployment of the Emergency Management Mapping Application (EMMA) to the Virginia Emergency Operations Center (VEOC), deployed the last week of August. GIS and IT staff at the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) are familiarizing themselves with the use and administration of EMMA and they are working to integrate EMMA into regular VEOC operations. EMMA currently accesses real-time data feeds pertaining to NOAA weather observations, National Weather Service watches, warnings, and advisories, NOAA radar, and USGS stream gage flow conditions. VGIN and VDEM are also working with the State Corporation Commission and electric utility companies such as Dominion to integrate real-time electric utility outage information and also with the Virginia Hospital and Healthcare Association to integrate real-time hospital status information. VDEM has undertaken an effort to redesign and streamline their existing installation of WebEOC, a crisis information management system that allows users to post messages and other information pertaining to emergency events. VDEM will ultimately integrate EMMA and WebEOC to allow VEOC staff to map incidents and other emergency management data that are managed through WebEOC in real-time. VGIN is also facilitating deployment of EMMA to the City of Richmond and the Albemarle County/Charlottesville Emergency Communications Center. Deployment of EMMA to these two localities will be complete by the end of the calendar year.

2006/2007 Orthophotography Status

All of 2006 orthophotography (~15% of state coverage) has been processed and delivered to localities. 2007 products are starting to arrive at VGIN and will be completely delivered by May of 2008.

See Jurisdiction Delivery Schedule attachment for the 2007 imagery in Board packet.

Clarification of 2002 VBMP License Agreement

VGIN has consulted with the Attorney General's office to obtain guidance on our desire to accommodate user input to relax some of the more prohibitive aspects of the VBMP Governmental Users License Agreement. This has resulted in a letter that was communicated to governmental users of the VBMP ortho products.

Letter is contained within the Board packet.

Definition of products and services

Pursuant to Code of Virginia mandate, VGIN has identified a variety of products and services and established rates for these.

2002 VBMP ortho pricing sheet included with Board packet

University licensing for Virginia Base Mapping Products

Dialog with major universities is beginning in October 2007 on the most reasonable structure for licensing and rates for university access to Virginia Base Mapping Program products (orthophotography, road centerlines, etc.). Current license structure for 2002 VBMP Imagery for University Users has proved too restrictive (similar to Governmental Users license). Target completion date for clarifications to license for universities is Q1 2008.

Plans for 2009 Orthophotography/Needs Assessment

Through Community of Interest (COIN), direct dialog, and survey, VGIN is working with constituents to help define the needs for the next go around for orthophotography collection and creation. It is our intent to release a Request For Proposal Q1 2008, allowing for a healthy advance notice for budget planning to state and local government users. *Spreadsheet of initial state agency analysis within Board packet*

LiDAR Needs Assessment for state and federal interests

In August 2007, VGIN and the USGS coordinated a Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) Community of Interest (state agency and federal) to discuss the need for LiDAR in Virginia. Essentially, LiDAR is a highly accurate optical remote sensing technology that uses laser pulses to measure properties of scattered light to find range and/or other information of a distant target, such as the surface of the earth. It has been developed in several neighboring states (NC, MD, PA, DE) to create a very accurate and reliable elevation base map. Example applications in Virginia could include emergency management planning in the coastal plain (e.g. sea level rise from hurricane) and slope analysis in mountainous areas of Virginia (e.g. Hurricane Camille Nelson County inundation). Board input and advice is sought on how to proceed.

Road Centerline project closeout, move to steady state maintenance

Project was formally closed out as a major project on the Information Technology Investment Board Dashboard in May 2007 and moved into steady state under the Virginia Base Mapping Program. Previous challenges of locality participation and VDOT adoption remain, but continue to improve. Plans are under way for transition of maintenance from Timmons Group contractor to in-house maintenance using internal staff. Expected transition completion date of December 2007.

New staff at VGIN since last meeting

Three new staff were hired in August and September:

- Stephen Barbie, Geospatial Technical Services Specialist
- Kenny Brevard, GIS Analyst
- Michael Vojta, GIS Analyst

Establishment of Community Of Interest (COIN) structure

The Virginia Base Mapping Program COIN structure was unveiled at the Virginia GIS Conference in September 2007. The COINs establish a structure by which VGIN can obtain user feedback to help guide our work. They will be composed of local and state government representatives primarily and will include federal, university and non-profit representation. With an emphasis on Base Mapping, there will be VGIN COINs for each of the seven base mapping themes as named by the Federal Geographic Data Committee Framework Data Themes:

- Orthoimagery
- Transportation
- Hydrography
- Cadastral information
- Governmental units
- Elevation
- Geodetic control

COINs will be formulated as our priorities dictate the themes that we focus upon. Immediately an Orthophotography COIN is being established to help guide the planned 2009 statewide refly. Specialty COINs such as Emergency Management and LiDAR may be formed when necessary.

VGIN Website Redesign and Release

The long awaited redesign of the VGIN website has begun. We are applying the finishing touches to a working development website. Target release is the week of October 8 – 12, 2007

Imagery For The Nation (IFTN) Proposal

The National States Geographic Information Council (NSGIC), an organization consisting of state GIS coordinators, initiated an effort to establish a sustainable base orthoimagery product across the United States. VGIN will be soliciting input from the Ortho COIN as well as solicit input through a survey of state and local government. At the next VGIN Board meeting we will be reporting back to the Board with an in depth presentation and seek Board input.

IFTN Briefing Sheet with Board packet